3840

Sutton Chapter

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER

OF

MASSACHUSETTS,

BOSTON, SEPTEMBER, 1840.

M. E. JOHN B. HAMMATT, G. H. P.

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ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

OF THE M. E.

Grand Royal Arch Chapter,

At the Masonic Temple, Boston, Sept. 8, 5840.

GRAND OFFICERS PRESENT.

M. E. SIMON W. ROBINSON, G. H. P.
E. JOHN B. HAMMATT, D. G. H. P.
" ELIJAH ATHERTON, G. K.
" ENOCH HOBART, G. S.
Comp. ABRAHAM A. DAME, G. Tr.
" SAMUEL HOWE, G. S.
" JOHN R. BRADFORD, G. M.
" ELIAS HASKELL, } Com. of Finance.
" THOS. WATERMAN, }
" CHARLES W. MOORE, } Com. of Charity.
" SAMUEL WALES, }
" ROBERT KEITH, G. Lecturer.
" NOAH D. HASKELL, } Grand Stewards.
" ANSEL CAPEN, }
" JOSIAH BALDWIN, Grand Tyler.

PERMANENT MEMBERS.

Comp. JOHN J. LORING, Comp. EDW. A. RAYMOND,
" Rev. PAUL DEAN, " CALEB BUTLER.
" ROBERT LASH,

ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS.

THE Grand Chapter was opened in ample form, and the records of the last meeting were read and approved.

The Committee on delinquent Chapters submitted a report, which was read and accepted.

The committee appointed to consider and report a general rule with regard to the funds and dues from delinquent Chapters, made the following

REPORT.

THE Committee, appointed at the last meeting of the Grand Chapter, to consider and report what disposition ought to be made of the FUNDS of the subordinate Chapters, whose *Charters* are revoked or surrendered, and to report a general RULE, which shall be applicable to all the subordinate Chapters under this jurisdiction, have had the same under consideration and respectfully ask leave to report:

The committee were deeply impressed at the outset, with the importance of the subject referred to them; which impression regularly increased at every step during the progress of their investigation.—The doctrine which has recently been set up by a few of the subordinate chapters, viz: that the control and management of the funds remaining in their treasuries at the time of the surrender of their charters, belong exclusively to the members thereof,—

appears to your committee to be alike heretical and dangerous. By what strange process of reasoning they have been enabled to arrive at this conclusion does not appear; but that it is founded in error, and a misconception of the rights and duties of subordinate chapters, does not admit of a doubt. The subordinate chapters are instituted for certain purposes, and invested with certain powers necessary to their accomplishment. Their charter confers upon them all the power and authority they can rightfully exercise. It authorises them to confer the degrees, and to receive and hold such funds as may lawfully come into their possession, for distribution among the poor and indigent. But it *does not* authorize them to exercise these functions beyond the period of their existence. This power does not reside with the members of these chapters, individually, nor is it independent of, but consequent upon, the existence of the chapter; and cannot, therefore, survive it. Whenever the chapter ceases to exist, all the rights and powers it conferred must necessarily be at an end. And it seems to your committee that they might with equal propriety, claim the right of conferring the degrees, as of controlling its funds, after the termination of its charter. These rights can only be exercised by chapters in their corporate capacity, and not by individual masons, however numerous and respectable.

Much stress has been laid upon the fact, that these funds are the legitimate products of these su-

bordinate chapters—the fruits of their labors—their lawful earnings—and to do what they will with their own, is a law as old as the institution itself. This, to be sure, would be a conclusive argument, if these funds were held in their own right ; but when it is considered that these chapters are the *agents*, or *trustees*, merely, instead of being the rightful owners of the property, the argument wholly fails. They hold the funds, *not in their own right*, but in *trust*, and your committee are unable to perceive how, or in what way, it can possibly operate a hardship, or furnish just cause of complaint, to remove these funds and give them their proper destination, after this agency or trusteeship shall have been terminated. By the surrender of their charters, they incapacitate themselves, and cannot lawfully act as agents or trustees; and the appointment of new agents to carry out the benevolent purposes for which the funds were created, seems to be not only a *permitted*, but a *required* duty ; and the Grand Chapter, whose province it is to watch over and guard the interest of the institution, cannot hope to escape the imputation of gross negligence, if she fail to perform it.

It has also been contended that, the control and management of these funds should continue with the members after the dissolution of the chapter, because, say they, "the funds were *here* collected and *here* ought to be disbursed :—we have among ourselves poor and distressed brethren, who need the

aid and assistance these funds are intended to afford." If the claims of the poor and distressed, to masonic charity, were limited to the particular spot, or geographical district, in which they received their degrees, there would be some plausible grounds for, if not justice in, the measures now contended for.—But the transfer of these funds from the treasuries of decayed chapters, or the hands of irresponsible agents, (for when the chapter is dissolved that appointed them, their accountability is at an end,) and placing them in the treasury of the Grand Chapter, cannot, in the least, divert them from their legitimate channel, or bar the claims of a solitary individual. Charity may be as promptly and as judiciously dispensed here as elsewhere, and the claims of the poor and unfortunate as scrupulously regarded. The Grand Chapter has its Committee on Charity, whose duty it is to attend to the claims of the poor, and it would be a reflection upon their moral honesty and integrity, which your committee are not authorized to make, to insinuate that they have not always and under all circumstances, faithfully performed it. The inconvenience of making application for charity to the Grand Chapter, on account of distance and infrequency of its meetings, is not, in the apprehension of your committee, so great as has been represented ; and even whatever there is of inconvenience may be easily obviated, if due regard be had to the convenience of applicants, in the appointment of its committee on charity.

Upon a careful examination of the whole subject, your committee are unable to discover any adequate cause for a departure from the old and established usages of the institution, and are unanimously of opinion, that all the effects, including books, papers, regalia, *funds*, &c. of subordinate chapters, should be delivered over to the Grand Chapter, whenever their charters are terminated; and that the subordinate chapters are bound by every consideration, which honor, duty and gratitude can suggest, to conform to these regulations. In order to accommodate those of our brethren who reside remotely from the city, and are entitled to pecuniary aid, it is also recommended that the Committee of Charity be composed in part, of brethren residing in such districts as have complied with the foregoing arrangements, and transferred their funds to the Grand Chapter; whenever it can be done consistently with the true interests and prosperity of the institution.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

S. W. Robinson,
John B. Hammatt,
Elijah Atherton,
Enoch Hobart,
} Com'tee.

The Committee of Finance made their annual report, which was read and accepted.

The committee on the By-Laws made the following report, which was read and accepted :

REPORT.

The committee appointed on the 10th of March last, to examine the By-Laws of this Grand Chapter, and suggest any alterations they may deem expedient, respectfully report :

That it is expedient to strike out the word *may* and insert the word *shall*, in the 2d line of the 3d article ; and after the word "*scribe*," in 3d line, same art. insert, "*or either of them*;" and also to add to said article: "If any Chapter under this jurisdiction shall fail to assemble once in any year, or shall neglect to be represented in this Grand Chapter for two years in succession, or shall fail for two successive years, to make a return of its officers and members and pay its dues to this Grand Chapter, then and in either case of delinquency, the said Chapter shall forfeit, to the use of this Grand Chapter, its charter, with its records, jewels, regalia and furniture, together with its monetary and all other property, of every description.

Article 14th, your committee propose to amend by striking out the words beginning with "*except*," in the 3d line, and ending with the word "*fees*" in the 7th line ; the effect of which will be to abolish the gratuitous admission of clergymen.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Jno. B. Hammatt, Chairman.

Voted, To proceed to the election of officers.—Companions Jonas L. Sibley, Saml. Caswell, Jr. and Hugh H. Tuttle were appointed a committee to collect, sort and count the votes, who subsequently reported the following companions as duly elected to the several offices set against their names, viz:

John B. Hammatt, G. H. P.

Elijah Atherton, D. G. H. P.

Enoch Hobart, G. K.

John R. Bradford, G. S.

Abraham A. Dame, G. Tr.

Thomas Waterman, G. Sec'y.

M. E. Simon W. Robinson then proceeded to instal M. E. John B. Hammatt, into the office of Gr. H. Priest, for the year ensuing, in due and ancient form. The M. E. G. H. Priest then installed his subordinate officers.

The following appointments were announced from the Chair, viz :

Rev. Ezra Ripley,
" Sebastian Streeter, } G. Chaplains.
" E. M. P. Welles,

Hugh H. Tuttle, G. Marshal.

Robert Keith,
Charles W. Moore, } G. Lecturers.

Elias Haskell,
Robert Keith, } Com. of Finance.
S. W. Robinson,

Charles W. Moore,
John Hews,
Samuel Wales,
Caleb Butler, } Com. on Charity.

Noah D. Haskell,
Ansel Capen, } G. Stewards.

Josiah Baldwin, G. Tyler.

The Grand Marshal, Stewards, and Tyler were severally installed into their respective offices, by the M. E. *G.* H. P.

Proclamation was then made by the *G*rand Marshal that the officers of the M. E. *G*rand Royal Arch Chapter of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for the year ensuing, had been duly elected and appointed, and regularly installed, and that the *G.* Chapter was duly organized.

Voted, That this Grand Chapter pay its proportion of the disbursements of the Masonic Board of Relief the present year.

The Charters of the following Chapters have been revoked, viz: King Solomon's, Charlton; Washington, Salem; Thomas, Princeton; Worcester, Worcester; Mt. Horeb, Lowell. The following have been surrendered, viz: King Cyrus, Newburyport; King Hiram, Greenwich; Franklin, Greenfield; Rising Sun, Nantucket; Concord, Concord.

Attest. THOS. WATERMAN, *G. Sec.*

REMARKS.

In presenting the foregoing Abstract to the several Chapters under the jurisdiction, the Grand High Priest directs that the Presiding Officers cause it to be publicly read in their respective Chapters. And he avails himself of the present opportunity to say, he expects that the Council of every subordinate Chapter will immediately make such arrangements as shall, for the future, secure a representation of their Chapter at the regular communications of the Grand Chapter.

While the Grand High Priest congratulates his companions that the heavy cloud which, for a time, cast a dark and threatening aspect over the masonic sky, has passed away, and that our institution is fast recovering its wonted activity, and displaying its original beauty and loveliness, he would caution them against being too much elated. He would earnestly impress upon their minds seriously to reflect on the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*. He would have them avoid the errors of the *past*, and in the *present* determine wisely for the *future*. He would admonish them that it is only by a strict observance of the ancient land-marks, and an undeviating adherence to the excellent principles and regulations as set forth in the ancient constitutions and rituals of the Order, that we can hope to perpetuate the beloved Institution that has been entrusted to

our care. And he would feelingly urge upon every Royal Arch Mason under his jurisdiction, the importance of so conducting himself as a man and a mason, that his conduct, whether in the Chapter or before the world, shall correspond with his professions and the virtuous principles of Freemasonry.—In this way shall we put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and, by the blamelessness of our lives, convince the world of the excellence of our Institution.

☞Communications to this Grand Chapter may be addressed to THOMAS WATERMAN, Grand Secretary, Boston, Mass.

The stated communications are held in Boston, on Tuesday next preceding the second Wednesday in September and March. The Massachusetts Convention of High Priests hold their meetings in Boston on the same days.

PERMANENT MEMBERS.

PAST GRAND HIGH PRIESTS.

*Benjamin Hurd, Charlestown,
*Dudley A. Tyng, Boston,
*Timothy Bigelow, Medford,
*Isaiah Thomas, Worcester,
*Oliver Prescott, Newburyport,
*Jas. D. Hopkins, Portland,
John Abbot, Westford,
*Andrew Sigourney, Boston,
*James Prescott, Groton,
Jona. Gage, Newburyport,
Rev. Paul Dean, Boston,
Daniel L. Gibbens, Boston,
Rev. Saml. Clark, Princeton,
*Josiah J. Fiske, Wrentham,
Edward A. Raymond, Boston,
Simon W. Robinson, Boston.

PAST DEPUTY GRAND HIGH PRIESTS.

Joshua Greenleaf, Newburyport,
*Simon Elliot, Boston,
Benjamin Russell, Boston,
*Saml. L. Knapp, Newburyport,
*Henry Fowle, Boston,
Augustus Peabody, Boston,
Rev. Benj. Huntoon, Canton,
Robert Lash, Boston,
Gardner Ruggles, Barre.

PAST GRAND KINGS.

*James Harrison, Charlestown,
*William McKean, Boston,
Charles Jackson, do.
Gilman White, Newburyport,
*David Coffin, do.
Amos Toppan, do.
Wm. Woart, do.
*Joseph Brown, Newburyport,
Caleb Butler, Groton,
Henry Whipple, Salem,
R. S. Spofford, Newburyport,
Charles Train, Framingham,
Wm. Whiting, Concord.

PAST GRAND SCRIBES.

*Stephen Howard, Newburyport,
Abraham Perkins, do.
*Nathl. Knapp, do.
Roswell Lee, Springfield,
*Saml. A. Otis, Newburyport,
Thomas Cary, Jr. do.
*Thos. P. Jackson, Boston,
Sumner Barstow, Charlestown,
Henry Purkitt, Boston,
James Morss, Newburyport,
*Daniel Baxter, Boston,
John J. Loring, do.
Charles Wells, do.

*Deceased.